

INDIA  
TODAY

# SIMPLY KOLKATA

A MONTHLY CITY MAGAZINE



(FROM LEFT) MUKTI  
GUPTA OF HELP US HELP  
THEM; TIRTHANKAR  
GUHA THAKURTA,  
GAY RIGHTS ACTIVIST;  
SHIRSHA GUHA OF DEEP  
PROBEEN PORISHEBA

## THE TORCHBEARERS

6 PEOPLE WHO ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

“I ADMIRE SHIRSHA FOR THE CHANGE SHE WISHES TO BRING ABOUT IN OUR SOCIETY. TO BE ABLE TO RECOGNISE A NEED AND BE SENSITIVE ABOUT IT REFLECTS INNER STRENGTH.”

MANJRI AGARWAL, *Restaurateur, former chairperson Young FICCI Ladies Organisation*

## ❖ Serving Seniors

SHIRSHA GUHA, 39, *Director, Deep Probeen Porisheba*

► **THE BEGINNING** It all started in 2013 when Shirsha Guha came to Kolkata to visit an old relative. “She used to have so much *joie de vivre*. But when we met her she was a shadow of her former self. She had lost self confidence and she was lonely and isolated,” she says. That is when the idea of starting Deep Probeen Porisheba (DPP), a company devoted to providing care and company to the elderly, occurred to her. Born in Denmark, with her formative years in the Caribbean, Guha had always wanted to do something in “her own country”. “We started in Salt Lake and did whatever we could to set it up while on a short holiday in Kolkata. I would then keep coming back every two months to see how it was going,” she said. But it was when her army officer husband chose Kolkata for a two-year peace posting that she decided to come back at the helm of DPP. With almost 70 members, DPP provides solutions to problems the elderly often face.

► **A FRIEND IN NEED** With youngsters working outside Kolkata or maybe even the country, it's the elderly who get isolated. “Even having an army of caregivers in the form of ayahs, nurses, drivers and maidservants isn't enough,” says Guha. “What they need is an equal companion. Our employees or *sahayaks* are graduates and sometimes even medically trained. They come with a thorough background check and are there to escort them when they need to step out, all for a nominal fee,” says Guha.

